FOOD PREVIEW

A summary of the food outlook especially designed to give maximum advance information to food editors to help them plan food features.

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Agricultural Marketing Service — F P - 43

MEAT.........For 1961, prospects are for meat production to increase enough to supply each consumer about 4 more pounds than during the current year. The increase will be mainly in beef, as cattle slaughter is expected to reach higher levels throughout next year. Supplies of pork will be less plentiful than a year earlier in the first half of 1961, but in the last half output will rise above a year earlier if next spring's pig crop is expanded, as now appears likely.

Beef........The current year's per capita consumption of beef may exceed, by a slight margin, the record 85.4 pounds reached in 1956. Next year it will doubtless set a new high of 89 to 90 pounds, a gain of about 4 pounds over this year.

Pork........In the first half of 1961 hog slaughter is likely to fall a little short of this year, however, by mid-year, the difference may be small. While hog producers reduced production in the spring and early fall of this year, reports from 10 Corn Belt States indicate they are apparently planning an increase in farrowings the late fall of the current year and early spring of next year. Therefore, hog slaughter the last half of 1961 may climb above a year earlier. The increase in pork output, though, is expected to be moderate, with total production next year only a little above 1960.

Lamb........Slaughter of sheep and lamb the first three-quarters of this year ran about 4% ahead of a year earlier. If slaughter in the remainder of this year continues above 1959--as appears probable--the number of sheep and lambs on farms next January will run close to last January's inventory. And if sheep production does not vary much next year, slaughter will be near the current year's levels, or only slightly larger.

POULTRY:

Broiler-Fryers....Recent increases in broiler chick hatchings point to a large supply of broiler-fryers into the first quarter of next year. In the current year consumers are eating record quantities of poultry meat: almost 30 pounds of chicken per capita, compared with about 20 pounds ten years ago.

Turkeys.....Preliminary indications point to increased turkey output next year, particularly in heavy turkeys, the class which showed an increase this year. August, September and October hatches, and November 1 eggs placed in incubators, which are the basis for early next year's marketings, show a gain of 30% over a year earlier. And farmers' intentions to keep turkeys for breeding purposes show an increase of 23%

Eggs........Per capita consumption next year is likely to dip further from the low of 325 eggs consumed this year--the lowest average in 18 years. Ten years ago average consumption stood at 389 eggs.

DAIRY........Increase in milk production next year probably will be greater than the advance of 1.1 billion pounds rung up this year. Therefore, commercial supplies of milk products are expected to reach a record high next year, but only slightly above levels of recent years. And commercial demand will probably again show an increase less than the population.

VEGETABLES:

Fresh.......Supplies for the fresh market the remainder of the current year are probably the same to a little larger than supplies a year ago. Over the next few weeks more cabbage, cauliflower and broccoli are expected to be available than last year, but indicated supplies of sweet corn, lettuce, green peppers, eggplant and Brussels sprouts are moderately to considerably smaller.

Processed...Due to this year's larger packs, supplies of canned vegetables available for the 1960-61 season probably were close to those of last season, and frozen vegetables moderately larger. But so far this season movement has run heavier than a year earlier, so total supplies of canned items remaining for marketing are probably a little smaller than a year ago. November 1 stocks of frozen vegetables in cold storage totaled 1 billion pounds, the greatest quantity ever reported.

Potatoes....Due to a 4% larger fall crop, slightly more potatoes are on hand for fall and winter markets, compared with a year earlier. As for sweet potatoes, supplies are almost a fifth smaller than a year earlier.

FRUITS........From now until next mid-year total supplies of fresh and processed fruits will probably run a little smaller than for that period a year earlier. This is partly because of the smaller 1960 production. However, assuming more favorable growing conditions next year, increases can be expected in both the 1960 deciduous crop and the 1961-62 citrus crop. On November 1 holdings of frozen fruits totaled 520 million pounds--down 8 million from a year ago.

Citrus......Early-season prospects for the citrus crop indicate production of early, mid-season and Navel oranges, Florida Valencia oranges, tangelos, lemons and limes will be somewhat smaller than in the previous season--but for grapefruit, about the same, and tangerines, much larger.

Frozen......Production of frozen orange concentrate is again expected to be heavy in the 1960-61 season. November 1 cold storage stocks of frozen orange concentrate stood at 20 million gallons--about a fifth smaller than a year earlier, and 4% below average.

NUTS..........Total production of tree nuts next year probably will run above average, though smaller than the near-record 1960 crop.

The Plentiful Foods Program

The Agricultural Marketing Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, through its Plentiful Foods Program, is cooperating in these food campaigns:

CRANBERRY INDUSTRY PROMOTION...........Through January

NATIONAL KRAUT AND FRANKFURTER WEEK.....January 26 - February 4